

crafting gun control legislation, our country is based on the premise that enforcement of our fundamental rights cannot be haphazard. Our Founding Fathers fought for the individual liberties we all enjoy—among them, the right to possess firearms. This right, along with the freedom of the press or the privilege against self-incrimination, must not be dismissed or diluted.

As a hunter and gun rights advocate, I applauded the Supreme Court for its decision. I look forward to continuing my work in Congress to protect the integrity of the Second Amendment.

IN HONOR OF THE SERVICE OF  
JOHN LANCASTER

**HON. STENY H. HOYER**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 10, 2008*

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and work of a historic figure in my community, Mr. John Lancaster, who passed away on July 1st at the age of 90.

John Lancaster was a man of principle and deep devotion to his community. As the first elected African-American county commissioner in the history of St. Mary's County, Maryland, Mr. Lancaster was certainly a political trailblazer. Breaking that barrier was indeed astonishing. John believed that he was accountable to all in the community as he simply but eloquently once said "I was a commissioner serving all people."

Perhaps the most important issue to John was education. A local official in my community recently dubbed him as the "education commissioner" and many regarded him as a mentor in education policy. As commissioner, John could not sit idly as public schools were decaying in front of him. Today, because of his efforts and foresight, education is a very important issue in St. Mary's County, and students are learning in first class facilities.

John Lancaster was the personification of hard work and optimism. In face of discrimination he pressed forward. Mr. Lancaster will certainly be remembered as an example for those who dare to dream the impossible. I would like to offer my condolences to his loving family, as we mourn the loss of an extraordinary person.

TRIBUTE TO RAYMOND THAYER  
DONOVAN

**HON. JOHN B. LARSON**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 10, 2008*

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a dear friend and mentor of mine, Raymond Thayer Donovan, who passed away on May 10, 2008. A World War II vet and engaged civic leader, Ray stood at the center of Connecticut politics. I, along with the entire State, mourn this great loss. It is with great honor that I submit for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD remarks made at his funeral by Kevin Brown and myself. Through these words, we remember the life and spirit of a truly great man.

KEVIN BROWN

First and foremost, I'd like to thank Louise and the family for the honor of being able to say a few words today in remembrance of Raymond. Like so many of you, I loved him very much.

I know that Raymond would have wanted me to be brief. For his sake, I will try. But it won't be easy. When Shelley called and asked me to speak today she told me that the family thought that I might be someone who could best tell Raymond's story. Try as I might, I couldn't do it. I felt like I was telling my story.

You see, all of my memories of Raymond are about what he did for me, how he helped shape my life, what he taught me, and the example he set. I finally realized that telling Raymond's story is so hard because it was never about him; it was always about the people in his life. Raymond was the most unselfish person I've ever met. For him, it was never about power, recognition, success or wealth. His greatest source of satisfaction came from helping others. He was never out front claiming the credit. He moved through the world without making any noise but his fingerprints were everywhere. He was always encouraging. He made us feel appreciated and a part of something.

More importantly, Raymond had this unique capacity to gaze at a room full of people and sense who was feeling left out, who was drifting from the group and who needed to be touched. Without us ever realizing why, he would suddenly appear as you turned to leave. And he would ask you to stay, telling you how smart you were, how much you were needed, and how proud he was of you. And once he knew you were back in the fold, he'd disappear just as suddenly and be on his way to make someone else feel important and wanted. And he did this without ever asking you to follow him. Quite to the contrary, he'd try to convince you to lead on the promise that he would follow. It was his reassurance that made so many of us confident to take such bold steps in our lives.

In fact, of one thing I am sure: Raymond never saw himself as a leader. If the truth be told, he was a shepherd. Someone who guided so many people through the journey of life, showing us the way and watching over us, making sure that, if possible, no harm came to us. And when we stumbled or fell, he was there to pick us up, dust us off and send us back on our way.

Whether it was his family or the Lions Club, the fourth district, the folks at Latimer Point, his co-workers at the State Capitol, or for that matter, anyone who knew him. Raymond was their shepherd, that silhouette of a man off on the hillside watching over us. A man who gave much and asked for so little; and someone who taught us the power of humility, integrity, and forgiveness.

Being a shepherd can be lonely. Standing watch can be a heavy burden. Every shepherd needs a star to guide them, a point in the distance, ever true, to fix upon, to draw strength from, and point the way. Raymond had Louise. She was his North Star and he knew he was her knight in shining armor. She was his greatest source of strength and her unconditional love was his greatest reward in life. Together, they helped us all endure our moments of doubt and enjoy ourselves along the way.

The last time that Raymond and I spoke was last year at a wonderful memorial service that my sister held for my mom in Saybrook. As always, Raymond was smiling and so happy to see me. He told me how proud he was of me and what a wonderful person I was. He spoke fondly of how wonderful my mom was and what a great job she did

raising us. This morning, I thought how ironic it was for that to be the last time I'd see Raymond. I realized that so many people go through the journey of life and never have a shepherd to watch over them. And I had two: Raymond and my mom.

Raymond, I hope that this wasn't too long!! I tried to tell your story as briefly as I could. And Raymond, I want you to know I've made the journey this far with your help and without you, I might surely have lost my way.

JOHN LARSON

A great light went out of our lives, and created an indescribable void and pang that only the warm memory of such a wonderful man can console us. On behalf of U.S. Senator Dodd and myself, it was an honor to fly a flag over the United States Capitol in memory of this Navy Veteran, elected official, and public servant. Ray Donovan's life defined civic commitment, love of country, and love of family.

My father will be gone 20 years this October. Ray and he were great friends. Ray Donovan made sure in my father's absence that he took time to share with me and my brothers and sisters the fond memories about my father. As all of my family can attest, Ray was a man of letters, a great writer, and conveyor of sentimentality and the human condition. His letters would always give you pause and make you reflect. In those letters he never failed to mention some anecdote about Dad and how proud he would be. He went out of his way to honor us, by honoring the memory of our father, and his friend. I am humbled to be asked to remember him today.

I heard of Ray and Louise Donovan long before I ever met them. Growing up in East Hartford, Democratic politics played a huge roll. For me, they were lessons learned at my mother's knee. They were, after all, the generation who elected John Kennedy. . . . The Donovans were kitchen table conversation at the Larson's house long before I ever met them in person.

My mother would talk of Ray Donovan in the most respectful tone. What a gentleman! What a thoughtful, intelligent man! What a loyal and good friend! What patience, what a calming force!

Through Mom's eyes and words we learned of a man who seemed like John Forsythe, Jimmy Stewart, and Ozzie Nelson rolled up into one. He did not disappoint. . . .

Louise and Ray . . . like . . . well . . . Tracey and Hepburn; Fred Astaire and Ginger Rodgers, or as we say in East Hartford, Herb and Reggie; Burns and Allen; Ricky and Lucy; Bill and Hillary, or Nikki and Bill: take your pick . . . in East Hartford; it was Louise and Ray, the political power couple of the day! Louise, unafraid to assert her view and giving new meaning to the word candor, Ray, diplomatic and ever gracious. They were quite a team. Whether it was Democratic politics, the Lion's Club, cookouts at Latimer Point, or serving the clam chowder at Bocce, they were inseparable.

They were at the epicenter of the Democratic Party in its hey-day in East Hartford. I still can recall the elegance and class of the dances on Founder's Plaza, under the moonlight, overlooking the Connecticut River and the Hartford skyline. Yet the most coveted invitation in town was the afterglow party at Walter Place! What a wonderful time it was, what a wonderful couple they made. If you close your eyes, you can still see the gala of that night unfold. Jimmy Fitz was at his zenith, Dick & Terry Blackstone, Timmy & Rosemary Moynihan, Ann & Toni Fornibi, Larry & Joe Delponte, Dick & Peg Torpey, Frank & Shirley, John & Ellie Fitzgerald, Gigi & Tony Roberto, Ray & Pauline, Rita &